

Toetrede

Liturgie van die Lig

Griekeland, met Pase

Die dag het oopgegaan
oor klip en rots en water;
'n veld van rooi papawers
het geblom uit spikkels bloed.

Binne 'n kalkwit koepel aan die kaai
was die skemer sag soos 'n gedagte:
wierook het gekrul teen 'n ikoon;
iemand het 'n kruis gekus -

Toe was daar stemme
wat uitkring oor die hele aarde:
die Heer het waarlik opgestaan,
trionfantelik, soos vandag,
hier aan die hawekant
by Aégina, met Pase.

Zandra Bezuidenhout

Woorddiens

Lesing 1: Johannes 20:19-31 (1953)

¹⁹ EN toe dit aand was op daardie eerste dag van die week en die deure waar die dissipels vergader het uit vrees vir die Jode, gesluit was, het Jesus gekom en in hul midde gestaan en aan hulle gesê: Vrede vir julle!

²⁰ En nadat Hy dit gesê het, wys Hy hulle sy hande en sy sy. En die dissipels was bly toe hulle die Here sien.

²¹ Jesus sê toe weer vir hulle: Vrede vir julle! Soos die Vader My gestuur het, stuur Ek julle ook.

²² En nadat Hy dit gesê het, blaas Hy op hulle en sê vir hulle: Ontvang die Heilige Gees.

²³ As julle die mense hulle sondes vergewe, dan word dit hulle vergewe; as julle die mense hulle sondes hou, dan is dit gehou.

²⁴ En Thomas wat genoem word Dídimus, een van die twaalf, was nie saam met hulle toe Jesus gekom het nie.

²⁵ Die ander dissipels sê toe vir hom: Ons het die Here gesien! Maar hy het vir hulle gesê: As ek nie in sy hande die merk van die spykers sien en my vinger steek in die merk van die spykers en my hand in sy sy steek nie, sal ek nooit glo nie.

²⁶ En agt dae daarna was sy dissipels weer binne, en Thomas saam met hulle. En Jesus het gekom terwyl die deure gesluit was, en het in hul midde gestaan en gesê: Vrede vir julle!

²⁷ Daarna sê Hy vir Thomas: Bring jou vinger hier, en kyk na my hande; en bring jou hand en steek dit in

my sy; en moenie ongelowig wees nie, maar gelowig.

²⁸ En Thomas antwoord en sê vir Hom: My Here en my God!

²⁹ Jesus sê vir hom: Omdat jy My gesien het, Thomas, het jy geglo; salig is die wat nie gesien het nie en tog geglo het.

³⁰ Nog baie ander tekens het Jesus voor sy dissipels gedoen wat in hierdie boek nie beskrywe is nie;

³¹ maar hierdie is beskrywe, dat julle kan glo dat Jesus die Christus is, die Seun van God; en dat julle deur te glo die lewe kan hê in sy Naam.

Lesing 2: Handeling 4:32-35 (1953)

³² EN die menigte van die wat gelowig geword het, was een van hart en siel, en nie een het gesê dat iets van sy besittings sy eie was nie, maar hulle het alles in gemeenskap gehad.

³³ En met groot krag het die apostels getuienis gegee van die opstanding van die Here Jesus, en groot genade was oor hulle almal.

³⁴ Want niemand onder hulle was behoeftig nie; want almal wat besitters van gronde of huise was, het dit verkoop en die prys van wat verkoop is, gebring en aan die voete van die apostels neergelê.

³⁵ En aan elkeen is uitgedeel volgens wat hy nodig gehad het.

Broodjies vir die Pad

Acts of the Apostles convicts governments and churches alike. They call us beyond isolated individualism to beloved community in which our well-being and the well-being of others is intimately connected. The passage begs a number of questions:

- What does it say about a nation that is content with millions of people living below the poverty level?
- How can we as people of faith tolerate the reality of "needy persons," whose lack is a result of others' decisions and no fault of their own?
- What does it say about developed nations who share only modest portions of their wealth to respond to the realities of starvation and epidemic?
- What does it say about a nation that is apparently content with unequal educational facilities and health care services?

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The gospel reading describes three interesting "moments" in the week after the resurrection:

- Jesus breathes on the disciples, bestowing God's Spirit on them. Spirit-centeredness is as near as our next breath, and God is moving through every breath and heart beat to awaken us to God's calling in our lives. We can

experience Pentecost with every breath. This passage challenge preachers to explore breath prayer and imagine God "inspiring" us with every breath. A session on centering prayer might be in order to edify the theme.

- Jesus is known by his wounds. Resurrection embraces woundedness – Jesus', God's, and our own. It does not deny pain, but embraces it with God's healing power. Jesus' suffering invites us to embrace our wounds as icons of grace in the context of healing communities. Our wounds, when embraced, create a solidarity of those who suffer, inspiring both understanding and action in relation to the pain of others.
- Jesus' encounter with Thomas is experiential. While Thomas gets a bad rap in this passage, we must appreciate Thomas' position. Only Thomas missed the resurrection. His quest for experience is laudable. He was not content with words, but wanted to see wounds. He wanted to experience the living Christ, not just a story about him. Moreover, despite being left out of the Easter joy, Thomas remains in fellowship with the other disciples. It must have taken great faith for him to endure the emotional distance between their joy and certainty and his doubt. But, he stayed, with all his doubts, hopeful that he too might experience the Risen Christ. When he encounters Christ, his experience of resurrection, wounds and all, inspires him to become a witness to the Living Christ.

<http://processandfaith.org/resources/lectionary-commentary>

Luke marks two key traits of the early church: testifying to "the resurrection of the Lord" and spontaneous, voluntary giving and redistribution of wealth so "There was not a needy person among them." "Great grace was upon all."

<http://sacraconversazione.blogspot.com/2009/03/second-sunday-of-easter-year-b.html>

Brood vir die Pad

These readings and gospel offer insights to the ways people responded to the proclamation of the resurrection by eye-witnesses and those who believed their testimony. They tell and then tell over and over the story of God's absolute, total love, particularly revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It does not loose any power in re-telling but only grows and spreads. The constant telling of this story created a community in which generosity, fairness and forgiveness happened spontaneously and became the norm. Naturally, doubt and other failures to engage fully occurred, but confession and forgiveness enabled individuals and the community to repair, restore and renew; in other words, to bring life back to life. Participating in this kind of community provided renewal and hope to real people in the actual, known circumstances of friends and neighbors and also became part of the story of the community. The

community replicated in its actions the words of its testimony about Christ, and imitated the love of God in their relating to others.

Responding to Heidegger's *On The Way To Language*, Luce Irigaray wrote *The Way of Love*, published in 2002. In it she explores the quest for community in the context of Western habits of thinking and behaving. The "spiritual transforms matter," she writes, "without absorbing it. It becomes flesh, the flesh itself becomes word. The one and the other interpenetrate and transmute each other such that the dichotomy between them no longer exists." (p. 11) Words, she insists, both enable us to approach one another but never fully grasp one another. This unbridgeable distance forces us to acknowledge that there is always a certain mystery or "transcendence" between us. We honor this distance by being generous and forgiving to one another. Then she proposes that we must deliberately "build" "places of" hospitality. These "places" are "Made of our flesh, of our hearts, and not only of words, [and] it demands that we accept that it takes place without our unilaterally overseeing its construction. It is in secret that it unfolds without any mastery of our seeing, by our domination through language." (p.154)

When we read the description of the early church in the Acts of the Apostles it seems alien to our Western individualism. It also seems naive about human nature. Yet it is inviting us to "build" "places" of the flesh and the heart where we can participate in a community of like-hearted people also formed in response to the story of God's staggering love, particularly displayed in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. A community not built on similarity but dissimilarity, not on sameness but diversity and a palpable respect for that diversity as if it were a kind of holy "transcendence" between us. A community that uses words to tell God's story, our story of transformation and to listens to the stories of others but then moves beyond words to acts of generosity and fairness that become a norm for us and the community. A community where everyone is keenly aware that "great grace is upon all."

God's story begins "the Word became flesh." But after the resurrection that Word can become flesh not just in one Person, but potentially in any person who seeks, finds and joins with others shaped by God's story.

<http://sacraconversazione.blogspot.com/2009/03/second-sunday-of-easter-year-b.html>

Wegsending

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